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## Chief of Chemical

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This will be my final opportunity to address you as the Chief of Chemical. I will be leaving shortly for an assignment as the Director, On-Site Inspection Agency, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Although I am certain that my next assignment will be rewarding and challenging, I will never forget my time as Chief and Commandant and the opportunities and challenges that presented themselves to the Corps over the past four years.

During my four-year tenure, sweeping changes impacted every facet of life in our nation, the Army, and our Chemical Corps. As a Corps and as individuals, we met each of these challenges with determination, innovation, and resolve—overcoming them with ostensible ease. Our Dragon leaders and soldiers never ceased to amaze me. They were able to accomplish miracles given limited time and resources.

Together, we successfully moved the U.S. Army Chemical School from its traditional home at Fort McClellan, Alabama, to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. Simultaneously, we integrated many of the school's functions into the U.S. Army Maneuver Support Center (MANSCEN). In what appeared to be an insurmountable mission challenge, our institution never faltered. Today, the Chemical School is a full partner in MANSCEN, contributing to the continued vitality of our Corps. Our Chemical School remains strong and continues to provide quality officers, soldiers, and noncommissioned officers to the field.

September 11, 2001, will always be remembered as one of the significant moments in our nation's history. Broad changes in our national security policy sprang from the attacks against Washington, D.C., and New York City. Our Chemical Corps remained in the forefront as we worked to overcome the damage to the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. Chemical soldiers immediately responded to these attacks and remained vigilant, guarding against further aggression and working to mitigate the effects of the subsequent Anthrax attacks. I cannot express the pride I felt seeing our chemical soldiers on the frontlines of these fledgling Homeland Defense activities.

As a Corps, we have remained engaged in every aspect of the War on Terrorism. Chemical units and soldiers performed vital missions at every echelon, such as at the Pentagon, in Afghanistan, and throughout the Gulf States during Operation Iraqi Freedom. In every one of these missions, chemical soldiers drew high praise wherever they served. Through all of these vital operational missions, I have endeavored to shape the continued transformation of the Chemical Corps. It is essential that our Corps remain relevant to the Army. This relevance can only be achieved through our transformational efforts.

I directed a number of initiatives that ensure the future vitality of our Corps, and some of you have participated in reshaping our path. Although some of these initiatives might have appeared drastic, changing threats drove the need for immediate action.

The continued threat of enemy use of toxic industrial materials (TIMs) demanded a change in our training strategy. While continuing to support the Warfighter, our Corps must work to become more technically adept.

At the Chemical School, we instituted Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) Familiarization training in all of our leadership courses. We are working toward HAZMAT Operator and HAZMAT Supervisor training and certification as a part of our leader courses. Additionally, we are building new courses that will enable a full menu of civil support skills. My goal is to give the Chemical Corps crucial capability to respond to TIM attacks in the homeland or abroad.

As part of the Total Army Analysis program, we reshaped Chemical Corps units, changing them from Cold War structure into organizations ready to support the unit of action and unit of employment. Future chemical companies will be multifunctional units, composed of single-function platoons. Companies will be built on a "plug-and-play" principal. Single-function platoons (heavy decontamination, medium decontamination, reconnaissance, mechanized smoke, wheeled smoke, and Biological Integrated Detection System) will form the building blocks yielding mission-focused companies targeted to specific operational missions and areas.

We have worked continually to protect our Army installations at home. Several new units are being activated to provide rapid response to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive (CBRNE) attacks against Army facilities. The CBRNE Operational Command (a flag officer headquarters) will combine the capabilities of Technical Escort and Explosive Ordnance and Demolition units into a full-spectrum response force. The CBRNE Operational Command will ultimately include an active duty chemical brigade, providing unprecedented support to our soldiers in missions ranging from homeland defense to contingency operations. Additionally, four Rapid Response Teams (company-sized elements) will stand up over the next two years, providing area response to CBRNE events at installations within the continental United States. They will bring a Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team capability to the Army.

As you can see, while the emphasis on our roles at home and on the battlefield may change somewhat,

the value of our role will never change. Our Corps's fundamental mission of protecting our comrades in arms from enemy use of CBRNE will never change. Today, as in World War One, we continue to "Rule the Battlefield Through the Elements!"

Military life mandates that each of us must at some point move on to a new assignment. I wish to leave you with just a few final words. I want to thank each of you for your support to the Corps during my term as Commandant and Chief of Chemical. It truly has been the highlight of my career—I cannot think of a more fulfilling assignment. Continue your great work; I wish you nothing more than complete success and fulfillment of all of your dreams. You are what makes the Chemical Corps the best in the Army. God bless you all.